

The Cincinnati Art Museum Bulletin

FEBRUARY 1954



Recent
Additions
to the
Collections
of the
Museum



HISTORY FLOWS with a steady current, and it is impossible to tell at what exact moment the Middle Ages became the Renaissance. The Divine Comedy is a consummation of medieval thought at the same time that it is the first monument of modern letters. So it is with Giotto's paintings, and so it is with this masterpiece, Siena herself, and the feminine gender is fitting for a city that claimed the special favor of the Most Blessed Virgin, had as much to do with bringing to birth the modern period as did Pisa or Florence, her sister cities of Tuscany. Yet in her artistic style she clung stubbornly to one of the most endearing, making it one of the most enduring features of Gothic art, the beauty and tenderness of the Virgin Mother, at once human and divine. As her human beauty was emphasised she became the Madonna of the Renaissance; it was the earlier sculptors who stressed her heavenly attributes with the abstract formalities of Gothic line. Like Siena herself this symbol of Siena stands partly in the Middle Ages and partly in the Renaissance. The colors are the magnificent epithets from the XIIth century Litany of the Virgin: red for the Mystic Rose, blue for the Star of the Sea, gold for the House of Gold, pale flesh tones for the Tower of Ivory. Faded though they are they hint at the full-bodied color that made a joyful noise through all the churches of medieval Christendom. Wood sculpture is rather rare in Italian art and what little there is seems to have been a Sienese specialty. The artist is unknown though there are suggestions of Pisan style and some slight resemblances to Maestro Angelo, a minor master who was active in Siena from 1360 to 1380. But this is hardly the work of a minor artist, and much more important than its authorship or date is the fact of its timeless and compelling loveliness.

P. R. A.

THERE WAS A TIME, not more than a hundred years ago, when half the paintings of the high Renaissance were called Rafaels and when Michelangelo was the only known sculptor of the XVIth century. Or so it sometimes seems on reading old catalogs. In fact one of the real virtues of modern scholarship, which has explored few fields more thoroughly than that of the Italian Renaissance, has been the rediscovery of a host of minor masters. Perhaps some of them might just as well have remained undiscovered, except that their identification lifted a burden of mediocrity from the shoulders of bigger men; and most of them were indeed minor where the struggles and victories of the human spirit are concerned. But all of them were touched to some degree by the genius of their age and breathed the same heady atmosphere that the greatest masters did. Niccolo Alunno was minor even by the definition of his inevitable nickname; it means alumnus or pupil, of some presumably more important master. Vasari says he was the pupil of Pintoricchio, the noted Umbrian painter, and

Left: "Madonna and Child," by unknown master of Siena, Italian XIVth century, painted wood, H. 63", 157.5 cm., gift of Miss Mary Hanna, accessions number 1953.151.

Cover: "Amoretti," by Niccolo Alunno, Italian (1430?-1502), tempera on wood, H. 15 1/4, "W.7," gift of Duke and Duchess of Talleyrand-Perigord, accessions number 1953.221.

he was born in Foligno in Umbria between 1425 and 1430. He died in 1502. His full name was Niccolo di Liberatore di Giacomo di Mariano, a proud roll-call. And this pride in proper names had much to do with the growing importance of the individual, one of the more admirable accomplishments of the Renaissance. But Niccolo was not minor in skill or a sense of decorative appropriateness which are no slight qualities in a painter. This small panel was painted for the front of a cassone or wedding chest where the amoretto, or little loves, holding a heraldic shield play their parts with modesty and with charm. P.R.A.

DUCCIO IS THE FIRST and greatest name in Siennese painting, but the generation that followed him, and was largely taught by him, boasted three masters of the first magnitude. They were Simone Martini and the brothers Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti. And they were more than Siennese masters; their influence was felt in Florence and as far as the papal court in Avignon, during its "Babylonian Captivity." Simone Martini died in 1344 and both Ambrogio and Pietro Lorenzetti were killed by the Black Plague which ravaged northern Italy in 1348, threatening to bring the early Renaissance to a full stop, almost before it had begun. Except that this singular disaster seems to have struck only at people over twenty, sweeping the boards clean for the youngest generation ever to have full charge of human affairs, as well as occasioning Boccaccio's masterpiece. Ambrogio probably studied under his older brother and was a fully established master of Siena by 1323. The virtues of Siennese painting, its linear grace and narrative skill, its intimate scale and Gothic color scheme, are summarised in Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Sometimes the narrative skill could rise to real drama as in this small panel whose unmistakable authority justifies its imposing attribution. The size shows that it was painted for household rather than church use, and it might have been carried on the perilous journeys of the period.

P. R. A.

THE ITALIAN PAINTER of the mid-XVIth century found himself in a position not unfamiliar to painters of the mid-XXth century. He could make variations on the style of an earlier master and be a Mannerist; or he could self-consciously strike out towards something intentionally different and be a Naturalist; or he could attempt a synthesis of the major older styles and be an Eclectic. The cousins Agostino, Lodovico and Annibale Carracci were Eclectics. Their academy in Bologna, the first formal art school, founded in 1585, selected the best elements from the antique, from Rafael and Michelangelo, and very nearly succeeded in establishing a universal style. It did establish a persistent academic style. Annibale Carracci, born about 1560, was the most personal

painter of the three, and though he devised the super-Baroque decorations of the Farnese Palace in Rome he was at his best in smaller genre or mythological subjects that let him paint calm and ordered landscapes. They are his chief claim on latter-day taste and profoundly influenced Poussin, as can easily be understood from the background of this small circular painting of Clytie. She is the maiden who repulses Cupid with a branch of thorn. It was a vain defense since she fell in love with Apollo, so hopelessly that the gods pitied her and changed her into a sunflower. The subject came from the inexhaustible source of classical allusion for the writers and painters of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, Ovid's "Metamorphoses." Annibale Carracci died in 1609 but his influence continued through the next two centuries, partly through the agency of Francesco Bartolozzi who made one of his popular engravings of this painting in 1772 when it was in an English collection.

P. R. A.

THE HUGE TRIPTYCH made up of thirteen painted panels held in a carved and gilded framework, itself an architectural masterpiece, joins major works by Zurbaran, Velazquez, Murillo and El Greco to give the Museum a Spanish collection which while small is of the first importance. Walter W. S. Cook calls it "that magnificently carved and painted altarpiece, one of the few completely preserved Spanish retables in America." Chandler Rathfon Post says, "it would grace any museum, even the Prado." In the season of 1555-56 Inigo Lopez de Mendoza y Figueroa, Count of Tendilla, dedicated it in his favorite church near Barcelona. It was a significant moment in Spanish history; the mad queen Joanna of Castille, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, died in 1555; St. Ignatius Loyola died in 1556, and in that year Philip II came to the throne. Ruler of half of Europe, mistress of the New World, champion of the Counter-Reformation, Spain was at the height of her physical power. Her flowering in art and letters was to come later, at the beginning of the XVIIth century. Meanwhile Spanish style though rich with promise was unresolved. Many of her painters were schooled in Italy or imported from the Spanish Netherlands. Three as yet unidentified painters seem to have worked on the Tendilla retable. One was the very Spanish, perhaps the first definitively Spanish master who executed the grisaille Annunciation on the outer panels of the wings. Another may be the figure specialist, trained in an Italian tradition. The third was almost certainly Flemish, the landscape specialist. The subject scheme is the life of Christ, supported by three popular saints. St. Francis, the Visitation, and St. Sebastian are shown on the predella. The six central panels show St. Jerome in the desert, the Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Deposition and Ascension of Christ. The wings display the Fall, with Adam and Eve in the Garden, balanced

by the Old Testament prophecy of the Redemption in the Sacrifice of Isaac. Crowning the retable rise the arms of Tendilla quartered with the arms of Loyola. The sumptuous color, monumental scale and dramatic impact are an unsurpassed portrait of Spain on the threshold of her Baroque greatness. P. R. A.

Americans visiting London during Colonial times often sought the way to 14 Newman Street. There lived the famous expatriate, "the greatest artist in the world," Benjamin West, the remarkable Quaker from rural Pennsylvania who charmed Europe with his ingenuousness and talent, became a close friend and historical painter to George III, helped found and in 1792 succeeded Reynolds as president of the Royal Academy. During his long residence in London, West was an outspoken democratic American. He welcomed Americans warmly and his kindness in giving assistance and instruction to several generations of American painters earned for him the title of Father of American Art. Stuart, Vanderlyn, Trumbull, Fulton, Morse, Sully, Charles Willson Peale and his son Rembrandt Peale, all culminated their training with him. It was with reluctance that West acceded to the wealthy Americans who frequently called wanting their portraits painted, for he considered portrait painting inferior to historical painting.

To 14 Newman Street around the year 1808 came Nathaniel Seaton Wise of Alexandria, Virginia, a young law student of considerable means, with a passion for literature and a taste for the finest. As the two Americans talked, their conversation probably turned to the subject of George Washington, for West revered him greatly and the young visitor had many tales to tell about the General, who had frequented one of the taverns owned by Wise's father. Then the 70-year-old artist produced this handsome portrait of the young Virginian. In style it is somewhat reminiscent of the French portraits he had seen during a recent visit to France, on which he had advised Napoleon to follow the example of Washington!

Wise returned to Alexandria, where he practiced law and became a magistrate. In 1812 he was a founder and first president of a literary society. In 1830 he died at the age of 42, leaving his wife and a large family of children. 1831 his widow migrated to Newport, Kentucky.

Fifty-seven years ago this portrait was exhibited at the Museum, lent by Dr. Theodore Nathaniel Wise of Covington, son of the subject. Today the painting hangs with other early American paintings in the Museum, the generous gift of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Seaton Berry of Cincinnati who recently inherited the canvas.

E. H. D.

THE ADDITION of "Winter Landscape"¹ by Aert van der Neer to the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum brings the total of its Dutch paintings to 21, in which the only important master not represented is Jan Vermeer. Although paintings by Aert van der Neer are to be found in most of the European collections and also in a number of American museum and private collections, he has attracted less attention in this country than so many other XVIIth century Dutchmen. His subjects are divided into two main groups: firstly, dawn, daylight, twilight and, particularly, moonlight scenes; secondly, winter landscapes. The moonlight subjects have a quiet romantic mood which becomes melodramatic in his numerous pictures of village fires at night. Examples of the first group are "Early Morning" and "Eventide" (H.d.C. 53, 54) recently acquired by the Mauritshuis in The Hague and "Landscape with Figures" (H.d.C. 618) in the Taft Museum.

"Winter Landscape," the gift of Mrs. Audrey Emery, is a fine example of the second type of subject. It is of the same high quality as "River in Winter," Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, No. 1720, and similar to it in details and composition. The Cincinnati landscape has Aert's customary right and left balance of trees and buildings, and, also, the usual deep background; but in addition the diagonals of the near shore and path rise to the left and meet the diagonal of the distant shore going toward the horizon. The bracing air, the patches of light snow, men skating and playing golf, the slanting rays of the sun pink on the clouds—all contribute to the picture's lyrical mood.

Not much is known about van der Neer's life. He was born in Amsterdam either in 1603 or 1604 and died there on November 9, 1677. Like so many others of his time and since, he was unable to make a living from the sale of his paintings, so he operated a wine shop for several years, failed in that, too, and died poor. He painted more than 600 pictures, made no etchings, and only a few drawings have survived.

Many winter landscapes have been painted from the time of the great Pieter Brueghel to the popular Grandma Moses, especially in XVIIth century Holland, including several by Jacob van Ruisdael and one by Rembrandt. The Cincinnati "Winter Landscape" deserves a place among the best of these.

G. V. G.

¹ 1953.1 (.58 x .70 m., 22¾ x 27¼ in., signed with the monogram AVDN). From a private Irish collection and that of the D. A. Hogendijk Art Gallery of Amsterdam, Mr. and Mrs. David Bingham of New York, and Rosenberg and Stiebel, Inc., New York. It has been exhibited at the Rijksmuseum, 1936 (Catalogus van de Tentoonstelling van Oude Kunst, p. 29, No. 118, ill.), and at the Duveen Galleries, New York (A catalogue of paintings by the great Dutch masters of the 17th century, October 8-November 7, 1942, No. 35.)



"Crucifixion," by Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Italian (active 1323-1348), tempera on wood, H. 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 33.1 cm., W. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 23.1 cm., gift of the Duke and Duchess of Talleyrand-Perigord, accessions number 1953.220.



"Clytie," by Annibale Carracci, Italian (1560-1609), oil on wood, oval 17", 42.5 cm., gift of the Duke and Duchess of Talleyrand-Perigord, accessions number 1952.199.





"The Tendilla Retable," 1555-56, by three unidentified Spanish painters, oil on wood, H. 144", 360 cm., W. 180", 450 cm., accessions number 1953.219.

"Winter Landscape,"
by Aert van der Neer,
Dutch (1603-1677), oil on
canvas, H. 22 3/4", 36.9
cm., W. 27 1/4", 68.1 cm., gift
of Mrs. Audrey Emery,
accessions number 1953.1.

SOME ARTISTS do more than record or interpret a landscape, they seem almost to invent and own the land they paint. It is as if the look of Rome existed by permission of the youthful Corot's brush or as if the plain of Arles hadn't been there till Van Gogh saw it. This may not be an indispensable faculty since many unquestionably great painters do not have it, but the countryside of Aix and Paul Cézanne are unmistakably one person, and in the same way, and almost alone of the Impressionist masters, Pissarro had the gift of possessing that gold-washed corner of the Ile de France where Impressionism itself was born. Camille Pissarro was one of the New World's choicer gifts to the Old, having been born in 1830 on St. Thomas of the Danish West Indies. The Paris he came to in 1855 was electric with artistic force. Pissarro first submitted to the Salon as "pupil of Corot." He met Monet in 1860, Cézanne in 1861, painting with him at Pontoise in 1873 and instructing him in the new mysteries of color and atmosphere which were to astonish France in the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874. He painted again with Cézanne at Pontoise in 1875, the

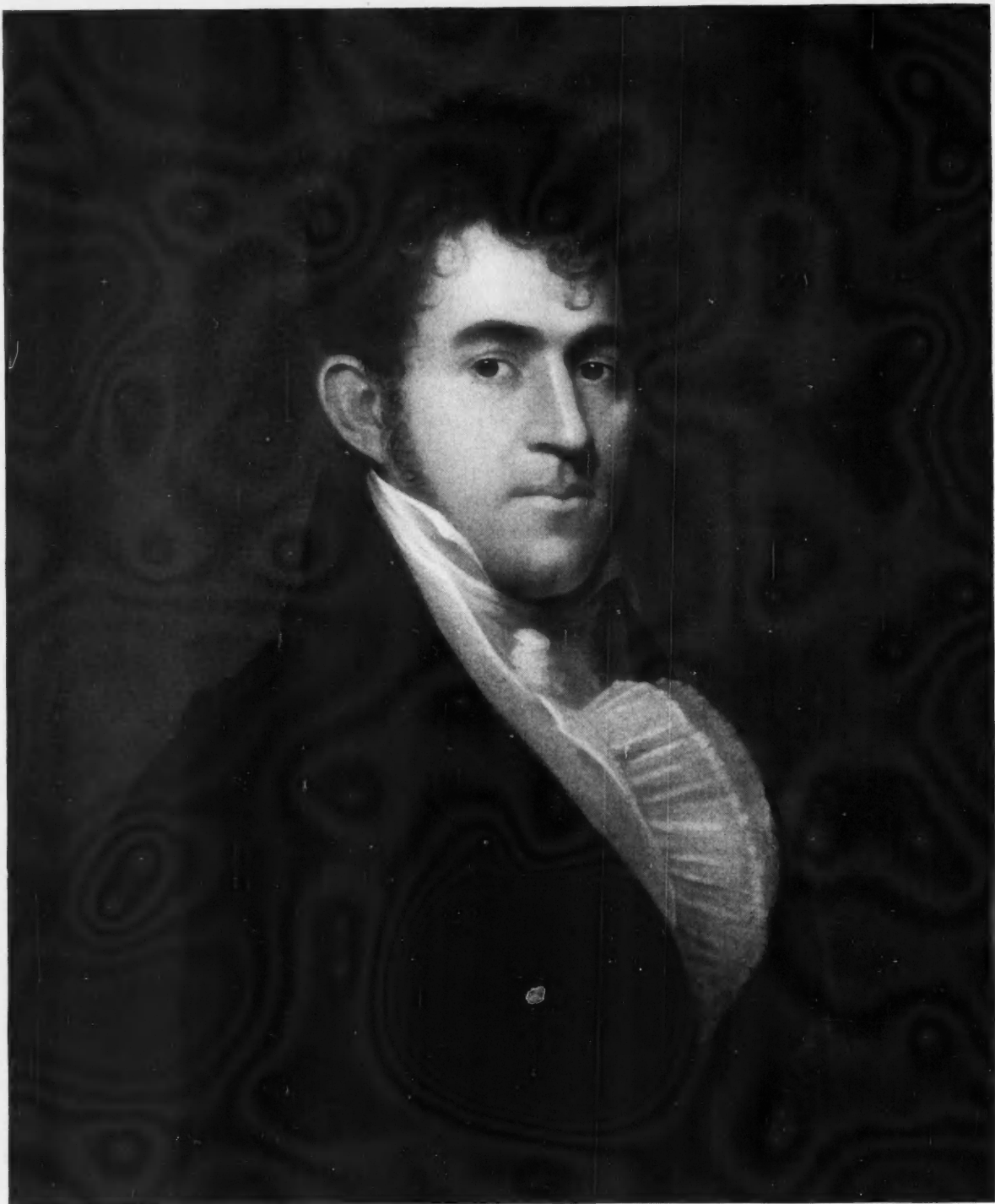




year of this masterpiece. It is undergirded with the post-Impressionism that Cézanne was not yet aware of in himself but which he had by some strange chemistry transmitted to the older man who in his modesty was always ready to learn. It was bought by Caillebotte, the wealthy amateur painter and champion of the Impressionists, who bequeathed it with seventeen other Pissarros to the state in 1893. Only seven were accepted, the leading official painter, Gerome, remarking of the bequest, "Does it not contain paintings by M. Monet, M. Pissarro and others? For the Government to accept such filth, there would have to be great moral slackening." Time has sufficiently punished Gerome for this statement and no one today would question Pissarro's eminence. He died in 1903, the year of Gauguin's and Whistler's deaths. He probably did not know that in 1903 Cézanne had yielded to a requirement of French official exhibitions and listed himself as "pupil of Pissarro." It was a fitting epitaph for the gentlest spirit and one of the finest painters of modern times.

P. R. A.

"Cabbage-Patch Near the Village, 1875, by Camille Pissarro, French (1830-1903), oil on canvas, H. 21 1/4", 53.1 cm., W. 25 1/2", 63.75 cm., gift of Mr. and Mrs. Albert P. Strietmann, accessions number 1952.240.



"Nathaniel Seaton Wise," by Benjamin West, American (1738-1820), oil on canvas, H. 27 $\frac{5}{8}$ ", 69 cm., W. 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ ", 56 cm., gift of Mr. and Mrs. Albert S. Berry, accessions number 1953.131.

THROUGH THE GENEROSITY of Mrs. Benjamin Tate the Museum has recently acquired an important painting by Thomas Eakins of shad fishing at Gloucester, New Jersey, on the Delaware River. This oil is one of a series of landscapes made in 1881 and 1882 at Gloucester, a decade after he returned to his native Philadelphia after study and painting in Paris and Spain. In this painting he, like many of his contemporaries, was interested in the effects of light—but not like some for itself alone. Here he was also deeply concerned with perspective, mass and anatomy. Eakins was a realist who understood nature with the detachment and thoroughness of a scientist, an artist who painted it with vitality and compassion.

Robert Henri, one of whose paintings hangs in the American gallery of the Museum, wrote that, "In the matter of ways and means of expression—the science of technique—Eakins studied most profoundly, as only a great master would have the will to study. His vision was not touched by fashion. He cared nothing for prettiness or cleverness in life or in art. He struggled to apprehend the constructive force in nature and to employ in his work the principles found. His quality was honesty. 'Integrity' is the word which seems best to fit him."

Today Eakins is considered one of the greatest American artists—the Courbet of American art. In a time when most artists were enmeshed in romanticism, Eakins, like Courbet, would not have painted an angel unless he had seen one. Moreover Eakins would have insisted on studying its method of flight. E. H. D.

*"Hauling the Seine," 1882,
by Thomas Eakins,
American (1844-1916),
oil on canvas, H. 18",
45 cm., W. 12 1/8", 30.3 cm.,
gift of Mrs. Benjamin
Tate, accessions number
1953.14.*





ALTHOUGH THE PRINT DEPARTMENT of the Cincinnati Art Museum was established only a few decades ago it is already rooted in a tradition that began with the collecting of Dr. Allyn C. Poole, Herbert Greer French and other fellow-members of the Print and Drawing Circle. Miss Emily Poole, as Assistant in charge of prints, catalogued the superb French collection and gave many years of enthusiastic service to the development of the Print Department. She was also closely associated with her brother in the formation of his carefully selected collection of prints and drawings. Having inherited the drawings, Miss Poole has now generously presented them to the Cincinnati Art Museum.

The collection of 47 Dutch, French, Italian and other drawings, referred to by Miss Poole in the Bulletin of the Cincinnati Art Museum, Vol. IV, 1933, p. 45, includes examples that will attract the attention of both museum visitor and scholar. One of them is "Venus and Adonis" by Luca Cambiaso (Italian, 1527-1585) published in the Gazette des Beaux-Arts, Vol. XI, 1952, p. 173. Another excellent drawing by Francesco Mazzuoli (1503-1540) of Parma, hence called Parmigiano, is the "Woman Seated Holding a Statuette," formerly in the collections of Nils Bark, Louis Galichon and J. P. Heseltine (Sotheby Sale Catalogue, no. 122). Gustav Pauli, former Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Kunsthalle, Hamburg, who examined the Poole collection during a visit to Cincinnati stated that the drawing, "Fête Champêtre," by Nicolas Lancret (1690-1743) was very fine. Lancret is also represented by a painting in the Cincinnati Art Museum.

G. V. G.

Left: Red crayon drawing by Nicolas Lancret, French (1690-1743), H. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", 18.1 cm., W. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 26.2 cm., gift of Emily Poole, accessions number 1953.92.

Below: "Woman Seated Holding a Statuette," by Francesco Mazzuoli, called Parmigiano, also Parmigianino, Italian (1503-1540), pen and ink drawing, H. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 22.2 cm., W. 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", 15.4 cm., gift of Emily Poole, accessions number 1953.115.



LAST YEAR the Museum's collection of contemporary bronze sculpture was enriched by the gift of the Cincinnati Modern Art Society of Marino Marini's "Kneeling Nude." Marini is the best known living Italian sculptor and his most popular subject is horse and rider, the first of which was produced in 1935. Since then he has made remarkable progress in producing works of increasing strength, freedom, authority and sculptural form. Not so well known, but as persistent a subject are his nudes and in these, as in his portraits, dancers, jugglers, acrobats and wrestlers, there is a similar though less pronounced development.

Marini was born in Pistoia in 1901. He attended the Academy in Florence and thereafter for many years devoted himself to painting and etching while traveling in Europe, visiting Paris many times. He began to work in sculpture in 1928 and since 1940 has been a professor of sculpture in Milan where he lives.

Marini is a cultivated man with a knowledge of the art of all times. He has written, "To be an artist is simple. It is simplicity which is difficult. In Italy so much is truly simple—the land, the people. Our discipline is not like that of the North; it is far less intellectual. Yet I suppose I am myself Nordic, a little. At any rate, I believe in cultivation as a protection against confusion. It is impossible to pretend to be a primitive."

E. H. D.



Volume 3 was completed with Number 4. Hereafter the Cincinnati Art Museum Bulletin, New Series, will be issued four times a season instead of six.

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